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Letter dated 13 March 2018 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

I have the honour to transmit to you herewith a letter from the Prime Minister of the United Kingdom, Theresa May, to the Secretary-General regarding the attack in Salisbury on 4 March (see annex).

I would be most grateful if you could circulate the present letter and its annex as a document of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Jonathan **Allen**

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Annex to the letter dated 13 March 2018 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

On 4 March, Sergei Skripal and his daughter Yulia Skripal were poisoned in Salisbury and remain in a critical condition. Detective Sergeant Nick Bailey, a police officer who was also exposed in the attack, remains seriously ill. Specialist military troops have been deployed to assist in the investigation and to secure the sites of contamination. Hundreds of members of the public have been affected by this incident.

The United Kingdom police have conducted a thorough investigation, which has identified that the chemical that was used in Salisbury was a specific nerve agent from a class of chemical warfare agents known as Novichoks. These were originally developed by the Soviet Union, and then inherited by the Russian Federation. Novichoks are highly toxic poisons that prevent the normal functioning of the nervous system. Their fabrication requires production techniques inside a controlled laboratory with experts with experience of handling highly toxic agents safely.

As I stated to the Parliament of the United Kingdom yesterday, the British Government believes that it is highly likely that the Russian Federation was responsible for this attack. No country except Russia has the combined capability in chemical warfare, intent to weaponize this agent, and motive to target the principal victim. This action is consistent with a well-established pattern of Russian State aggression. The Foreign Secretary made clear to the Russian Ambassador in London on 12 March that this leaves only two possible scenarios. Either the Russian State has attempted murder on British soil using a chemical weapon or Russia has lost control of its stockpile of nerve agents.

The Foreign Secretary asked the Russian Ambassador to explain which of the two possibilities was true and to account for how this Russian-produced nerve agent could have been deployed in Salisbury against Mr. Skripal and his daughter. He also stated to the Ambassador that the Russian Federation must immediately provide full and complete disclosure of the Novichok programme to the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons. He has requested the Russian Government's response by the end of Tuesday, 13 March.

The United Kingdom is determined that those responsible for this crime be brought to account in accordance with the rule of law. This attack on British soil using a banned chemical weapon is not only a crime in its own right, but a clear challenge by a State Member of the United Nations to the rules-based international order. As such, it must be addressed with the support of the international community.

(*Signed*) Theresa **May**